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JPRS L/9739

18 May 1981

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 17/81)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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AFGHANISTAN

BARBIERI CLAIMS GLOBAL BALANCE MUST BE COMBINED WITH LOCAL BALANCE

LD241429 Turin LA STAMPA in Italian 21 Apr 81 p 1

[Article by Frane Barbieri: "Chain of Oblivion"]

[Text] It seems like a trick of history, but it could also be regarded as a historical inevitability: the Soviet chiefs of staff are examining the experiences of the U.S. Army in Vietnam with the aim of drawing up a new strategic plan for Afghanistan since the blitzkrieg has proved a failure. It seems that two alternatives are being studied. Following the "scale" adopted by the Americans, if they wanted to carry out a total occupation (which would also mean total war) the Soviets would have to send half a million troops into the Afghan mountains. However, if they were content merely to control key points and routes in the country, as the Americans hoped to do for a while, it would be enough for the Red Army contingent to be increased from its present 85,000 to 110,000 men. At present the second alternative is being pursued (22,000 Soviets have recently entered Kabul) but the former alternative is also being worked on since the intensification of the war could endanger the strategic strongholds themselves, just as happened to the Americans in Vietnam.

The data reaching us from Afghanistan could be--and in fact undoubtedly are--exaggerated. Nevertheless, despite exaggerations and contradictions, both sides confirm that violent clashes are underway at Kandahar, the country's second largest city. The Muslim guerrillas claim to be defending the liberated city against Soviet attacks, while the Karmal government maintains, on the contrary, that its troops are defending the city against rebel attacks and that a Soviet division has rushed to the government forces' aid. However, these two half-truths do reveal one indisputable truth: Afghanistan is in the grips of an out-and-out war, which exploded anew as spring melted the snows, just as in Vietnam the now legendary offensives were unleashed as the rains receded.

All the strange wars and semiwars (of which there are now some 50) which are unsettling the world reveal the following rule: the sense of freedom and national independence comes before and above any ideology or social system. Just as Vietnam defeated the United States, Vietnam itself is becoming enmired in the Kampuchean jungle, as the Americans did in the Mekong swamps, and so too Afghanistan is becoming a Vietnam in reverse, with the Russians in the Americans' place. The chain of minor wars is growing at a frightening rate, often with reversed and confusing fronts, while the world--so worried by the prospects of a major war--seems inclined to bury them in an expedient chain of oblivion.

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Eritrea was forgotten for Kampuchea, then Afghanistan's fate obscured Kampuchea's and now concern for Poland has caused Afghanistan's eclipse in the world's attention.

First they said: Hands off Kampuchea or no negotiations. When the Kampuchean situation remained unchanged, there was a retreat to: Hands off Afghanistan or no negotiations. Next they said: Hands off Poland or no negotiations. Now already they are saying: Moscow has acquitted itself well with respect to Poland, so negotiations can start. Without the chain of oblivion there would probably never be the major negotiations still necessary to achieve the mythical global balance. Basically world peace is worth an Afghanistan or a Kampuchea or maybe an El Salvador. But is this really so? Are we sure that the greater peace is to be achieved by accepting and forgetting so many smaller wars?

The other day we heard a Soviet diplomat say that the global balance already exists: otherwise the U.S. negotiators would never have signed SALT-II. Even Haig has acknowledged it, he said. It must be true that planetary balance exists inasmuch as both powers are in a position to destroy each other and the entire world 15 times over. Nevertheless, under the umbrella of the self-destructive balance there is an imbalance, inasmuch as one side (most recently the United States) has a range of forces that enable it to intervene in several gray, bordering or ill-defined areas of the world, counting on the nonreaction of the other power, which could cause a total disaster but not carry out a local counterintervention.

The famous Pershing missiles are part of this imbalance: right now the Soviet SS-20S could destroy Europe or occupy it through blackmail, whereas Europe has no means of destroying or blackmailing Eastern Europe. The only deterrent is the U.S. capacity to destroy everyone, including itself, assuming Washington decides it is advisable to do so to avoid losing Europe.

Therefore in order for the balance to defend us better against wars, it must be not only global but also specific, local, so to speak. Partly because not all the bombs threatening the world are nuclear. It must not be assumed that all the peoples exposed to invasions or interventions (from Kampuchea to Afghanistan and from Poland to El Salvador) will be satisfied with a global peace based on a balance of power if the price of a greater peace must be the abandonment of their minor independences and freedom of choice. For the small countries these are major values and as absolute as universal peace--and important enough to risk a major war. Europe will not become more peaceful by forgetting Afghanistan and will not deliver the Polish Catholics by sacrificing the Afghan Muslims.

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IRAN

'ASAHI' INTERVIEWS BANI-SADR ON WAR, U.S. RELATIONS

OW041451 Tokyo ASAHI SHIMBUN in Japanese 2 May 81 Evening Edition p 2

[Text] ASAHI SHIMBUN Tehran Bureau 1 May--President Bani-Sadr in an interview granted this bureau on 1 May made the first specific disclosure about war gains the Iran-Iraq war started, saying that Iran has "recaptured 40 percent of the territory occupied by the Iraqi Army." Iranian troops, he said, continue to overwhelm the enemy without arms aid by any foreign country but the war is likely to be protracted. He also made it clear that Iran has no plan to normalize its diplomatic relations with the United States.

In the 50-minute interview held at the presidential mansion, Bani-Sadr spoke of various issues facing Iran, stating his views in a specific and detailed manner. He has been busy inspecting frontlines and leading war efforts. Furthermore, he has of late refrained from commenting on a confrontation in domestic politics. Accordingly, his remarks during this interview were the frankest in the recent period.

Regarding the Iran-Iraq war, the president said that while Iraq has several times more arms than Iran, the latter holds superiority in terms of training, morale, the purpose of war and tactics. He disclosed for the first time that Iran had recaptured 40 percent of territory from Iraqi occupation. With foreign arms supply, if available, Iran could end the war at an early date, he said. At present when such supply is not available, he added, Iran must try to keep the equipment it now has, and, therefore, it is unable to launch a large-scale offensive. This would naturally prolong the war, he said.

Speaking on the Iranian foreign policy after the hostage incident, he expressed his hope for close relations with Japan and European nations, particularly with Japan in Asia. Iran wants to establish independent, friendly ties with them, free from the superpowers' domination. Turning to relations with the United States, however, Bani-Sadr made no effort to hide his anger at the U.S. authorities even demanding compensation for properties of the elements of the old establishment who fled Iran. "The normalization of diplomatic relations with the United States is impossible so long as it continues to wield power," he declared.

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Asked about Iranian accomplishments in the 3 years since the revolution, Bani-Sadr said that the impact of the war and consequences of the hostage incident and economic sanctions were tremendous. He admitted that Iran has not yet succeeded in ending its economic reliance on foreign countries. He also noted that the "lack of mutual confidence" among the people as a national trait resulting from the prolonged oppressive rule has not yet been corrected completely. The president warned that the curbs on freedoms, imposed by the government authorities under the pretext of war efforts, have proven to be a factor hampering the efforts to attain the goal of the revolution.

The Iranian economy has been sluggish because of the war, with one-third of the working force (3.5 million to 4 million people) unemployed and the inflation rate soaring 41 percent in 2 years. Referring to the capabilities of the Rajai Cabinet which bears the responsibility for improving the nation's economic plight, Bani-Sadr said that "It cannot win confidence of the people so long as the rule by terror continues." Strongly criticizing the posture of the Rajai Cabinet based on the conservative, hard-line policy of the Islamic Republican Party, he lashed out at its hand-to-mouth style economic management, saying that the cabinet has "no long-range plan to prepare for the future."

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IRAN

FIFTY SIX MILLION DOLLAR LOSS IN ARMS DEAL

JN191634 London REUTER in English 1611 GMT 19 Apr 81

[Text] Tehran, 19 April (REUTER)--Iran admitted today it had lost 56 million dollars in an arms deal swindle in Europe while trying to get badly needed supplies for its war against Iraq.

Asked at a press conference about local rumours that 560 million rials (7.5 million dollars) sent to France to buy arms had been stolen by Iranian representatives, chief government spokesman Behzad Nabavi said "It is not 56 million tomans but 56 million dollars." One toman equals 10 rials.

This was the first officially reported bid by Iran to obtain arms outside government channels in its seven-month-old war with Iraq.

Mr Nabavi, answering written questions, said the Iranian charge d'affaires in Spain, responsible for overseeing the purchase, had been recalled to Tehran to explain the fiasco.

Iran's Bank Melli in Paris had paid 56 million dollars against shipping documents which turned out to be incomplete, he said, but added "the government has frozen the money and a court is investigating the matter."

Journalists were unable immediately to question Mr Nabavi further on the matter.

Mr Nabavi said later in a state radio interview the court was in Paris "because the crime happened in Paris."

He did not explain how the money paid by Bank Melli could be frozen, nor what chance there was of regaining it.

His revelations followed persistent rumours in Tehran that funds set aside to buy arms had been embezzled by Iranian representatives abroad.

"The fight against Saddam [Iraqi President Saddam Husayn] needs ammunition and military equipment which we have to get from sources that are not governments but companies," said Mr Nabavi, one of the most powerful figures in the government of Prime Minister Mohammad 'Ali Raja'i.

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Under the deal, the Iranian Embassy in Madrid was to have endorsed shipping documents when the arms cargo was loaded, and then the money would be paid.

"All this was done in the wrong way," he declared. "The Iranian charge in Spain endorsed the shipment without seeing the documents and the Bank Melli paid the money even though the documents were incomplete."

Bank Melli is the biggest of Iran's nationalised commercial banks and handles most foreign trade.

Iranian leaders have previously spoken of obtaining arms abroad to make up for war losses and Iran is believed to be receiving small arms from North Korea and Libya, as well as what it can get from non-governmental sources in the European weapons market.

The small home arms industry also makes some ammunition.

A spokesman for the Spanish Embassy in Tehran said he had no information on the reported deal, adding that the Madrid government was pledged not to sell arms to either of the warring nations.

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IRAQ

BRIEFS

FRENCH NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS SUSPENDED--Iraq has suspended negotiations with Framatome on construction of a nuclear plant. Reason: Baghdad is concentrating its purchases on arms right now. [Text] [Paris LA LETTRE DE L'EXPANSION in French 20 Apr 81 p 5]

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ISRAEL

ARAB LEAGUE REPORTS ON CONDITIONS IN WEST BANK

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13-19 Feb 81 pp 43-45

[Article: "Boycott of Israel Across Open Bridges: Least Harmful Form in Dealing With Local Arabs"]

[Text] What are the positive and negative returns of the open bridges with the West Bank and Gaza in light of the principles of the Arab boycott of Israel? Is there a better formula to strengthen the resistance of the Arab population in the occupied lands? The two questions have been answered by a study, a document prepared by the General Secretariat of the Arab League and submitted to Arab officials. AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI stands alone in publishing it with its statistics.

Immediately after the June 1967 War which placed the West Bank and the Gaza Sector under Israeli occupation, a situation was created which unprecedented in the Arab world, which had been subjected to Israeli aggression since 1948. On the one hand, the occupation authorities worked systematically to subjugate the occupied lands and their peoples to their authority. Their intention was to drain off the resources available there and try to induce the natives to emigrate by various pressures, not the least of which was economic pressure, and subsequently appropriate the land. This is considered the final goal of Israeli policy. On the other hand, it was inevitable that Jordan should consider the occupied lands as its own in spite of the Israeli occupation and consequently would work to support the resistance of the natives by continually offering material aid by paying the salaries of official employees and facilitating the movement of the natives over the bridges so that they would keep their ties to their homeland. As a complement to all of that, it was inevitable that the bridges would be open to products from the West Bank and the Gaza Sector so that the producers would not fall prey to the Israeli occupation which would impose very low prices on them, spoil their efforts and induce them to refrain from working their land and consider emigration. Thus a situation was created which Israel could exploit to penetrate the Arab markets by passing its goods over the bridges as goods produced in the occupied lands, or at least by participating in the production of goods in the occupied lands, either directly by setting up a partnership with the producers or by linking production to some Israeli components.

It was also inevitable that the other Arab governments and the Arab League, especially the main office of the boycott of Israel, should consider the question of the open bridges from the standpoint of the principles of the boycott agreed upon

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by these governments. It has become the backbone of their laws and regulations, and some of the Arab governments have expressed reservations toward the policy of open bridges, considering it a violation of the principles of the boycott. In their view, another form must be found to support the resistance of the population of the occupied lands.

It is clear that every opinion has justification, and it is not our purpose here to put one opinion before another or to come out with a new opinion. The intent of this document is to outline a brief picture of the economic situation in the occupied lands and to demonstrate how much this situation is linked to the Jordanian (and Arab) economy on the one hand and the Israeli economy on the other. Then the comparison, in light of that, between keeping the bridges open and closing them proceeds from the present and future interests of the population of the occupied lands. Accordingly, this study falls into three main parts. The first deals with the economic situation in the occupied lands. The second reviews the existing trade relations between the occupied lands and both Israel and Jordan, and the third deals with the economic and social efforts, both positive and negative.

Economic Situation in the Occupied Lands

The major difficulties surrounding a study of the situation of the occupied lands is the rarity of statistical information from Arab sources, since the circumstances of the occupation do not permit the collection of such information. Consequently, all of the statistics in this study, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the Quarterly Statistical Report for the Administered Lands published by the Israeli Central Department of Statistics.

The statistics show that the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Sector at the end of 1978 was about 1,137,300 (60 percent in the West Bank and 40 percent in the Gaza), compared to 1971 figures of about 1,007,400 (62 percent in the West Bank and 38 percent in Gaza). These statistics also indicate that the labor force in the occupied lands in 1978 was about 33.4 percent of the population age 14 and older, or about 213,800 people. It is worth mentioning that the participation of men in the labor force was double that of women, and the margin of women in the labor force explains the low percentage of workers in relation to the total population. It is noted that the percentage of those working in Israel was 32 percent of the total workers in the year mentioned above (that is, about 68,700). A report issued by the International Labor Organization mentions that the number of those working in Israel in the occupied lands rose from 20,000 to 70,000 between 1970 and 1978. The income of these accounted for about a third of the increase in the gross national product for the occupied lands in that period. However, most of this income was used to cover the value of the imports of the occupied lands from Israel, which constitute on the average about 90 percent of the total imports.

The aforementioned report says that there is constant emigration from the occupied lands because of the low level of economic activity and the shortage of suitable job opportunities. It is estimated that about 20,000 emigrate each year, most of them young people. The report notes that the level of investment is markedly low as a result of the reluctance of owners of supplies to employ their capital because of the occupation.

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In this framework, Israel is working to achieve two basic goals. The first is an attempt to take in Arab workers with the intention of putting them to work at low wages in construction, agriculture and the textile industry in particular, and the second is to lower economic activity in the occupied lands in the hope that that will increase the emigration of skilled and educated workers, especially to the Arab oil countries.

A study of the economic and social conditions on the West Bank indicates that Israel decreased the population of the West Bank between the years 1971 and 1977 by about 17.5 percent (or from 805,000 to 665,000 people). Israel is taking many punitive and coercive steps, including confiscation of land, annexation and arrest, to achieve its goal of driving out the population. Among the results of the Israeli colonization policy was a decrease in the acreage of agricultural land as a result of Israel's appropriation or confiscation of it to build settlements, which has led to lowering the agricultural sector's share of the gross national product from 35 percent before the occupation to 26 percent. In 1976, the number of workers in the agricultural sector was reduced by 14 percent. The same study of economic and social conditions on the West Bank indicates that the emigration from the agricultural areas which accompanied the occupation and the control by its authorities of some of the agricultural land has led to a reduction in the number of farms on the West Bank by about 3,000 agricultural titles. Israeli statistics for 1967 indicated that there were 52,100 titles, while according to Jordanian figures for 1965 there were then about 55,100 titles.

From another aspect, Israel has pursued a policy of converting Arab agriculture in the occupied areas to production of crops used by Israeli industry. For example, it seems that this policy has led to reducing West Bank production of melons from 36,000 tons in the year 1967-68 to only 8,000 tons in 1971-72, a reduction of 78 percent. In return, some crops have recorded an increase in production, including sesame, beans, cotton and sugar beets. Acreage planted in sesame in the West Bank rose from 18,000 dunums in 1967-68 to 30,000 dunums in 1970-71. Acreage planted in tobacco rose from 4,500 dunums in 1969 to 12,000 dunums in 1970. It is also noted that production of vegetables (such as eggplant, peppers, etc.) rose while production of wheat and barley fell, which suggests that Israel intends to make the population of the occupied lands increasingly dependent on it for wheat, which is considered the basic element in nutrition. Israel has tried to implement its desire by forming what it calls "agricultural councils" in the occupied regions.

Industry has no important role in economic activity in the occupied areas. The occupation authorities have not opened up opportunities for industrial development. In 1977, the total number of workers in the industrial sector in the West Bank was 9,061 workers, including 1,437 in the food, beverage and tobacco industries, 2,195 in the textile and clothing industries, 690 in the leather and leather products industry, 1,160 in the lumber and lumber products industry, 711 in the rubber and plastic and chemical products industry, 663 in the nonprecious metals industry, 1,307 in the basic minerals and mineral products industries and 898 in other industries.

It is clear from this quick look that the economy of the occupied lands has a limited base and relies basically on agricultural activity. Israel has been able to control it, work to weaken it, limit the possibilities for its development,

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and subjugate it to the Israeli economy. Israel has also tried to make it impossible for agricultural production from the occupied lands to compete with Israeli agricultural production, which enjoys great support in the form of production elements available at low prices, including water, equipment and agricultural machinery, and assistance in marketing the produce at home and abroad. Israel has tried to take advantage of this situation, which has led to obvious and hidden unemployment. It has permitted only a limited number of unemployed Arab workers to work inside Israel and in this event has even tried to discriminate against them by subjecting them to the same taxes imposed on Israeli workers without enabling them to take advantage of the various social services offered to Israeli workers, except marginally.

Commercial Exchange, in Figures

The figures for commercial exchange for the occupied lands indicate that the greater part of the imports and exports are from or destined for Israel as a result of Israel's policy of tightening the collar on the occupied land. In 1978 the total imports of the West Bank amounted to about 4.35 billion Israeli pounds, 86 percent from Israel, 2 percent from Jordan and 12 percent from other countries. It should be noted that more than half of the imports from Israel were of agricultural products, while most of the imports from Jordan and other countries were industrial commodities. As for exports, the total in 1978 amounted to 2.565 billion Israeli pounds, of which 57 percent were exported to Israel, 42 percent to Jordan and 1 percent to other countries. As a consequence of that, the West Bank shows a balance of trade deficit of 1.785 billion pounds. The balance of trade with Jordan shows a surplus of 997 million Israeli pounds and a deficit with other countries of 482 million Israeli pounds.

Statistics show that in 1978 the total imports of the Gaza Sector were 3.395 billion Israeli pounds, of which 90 percent came from Israel and 9.5 percent from other countries (other than Jordan). Exports totaled 2.176 billion Israeli pounds, 66.6 percent to Israel, 26.4 percent to Jordan and 7 percent to other countries. As a result, there is a total trade deficit of 1.219 billion Israeli pounds in the year in question. As is the case with the West Bank, the balance of trade recorded a deficit with Israel of 1.624 billion Israeli pounds, while there was a surplus of 575 million Israeli pounds with Jordan and a deficit of 170 million Israeli pounds with other countries.

Economic Effects of Policy of Open Bridges

A. Having the bridges remain open means that the farmers of the West Bank and the Gaza Sector can market their surplus products in Jordanian and Arab markets at prices higher than the prices they would obtain if they marketed those products in Israel, since there those commodities compete with similar, lower-priced Israeli commodities. As a result, this will maintain reasonable sources of income for the workers in this sector which will enable them to stay on their land and not consider emigration. The number of workers in this sector in 1978 amounted to about 46,300 workers forming about 32 percent of the labor force in the West Bank and the Gaza Sector. The value of the agricultural commodities exported from the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan in 1978 amounted to 1,016,985 Israeli pounds.

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B. The matter is not limited to the marketing of agricultural commodities. There are industrial goods which are being exported to Jordan and some of the Arab countries, such as olive oil, soap and precious stones. These exports to the East Bank were worth about 644,000 Israeli pounds for 1978, and there were about 21,000 workers in this sector making up less than 12 percent of the labor force in the West Bank and Gaza.

C. There is an indirect benefit as a result of the movement of products from Gaza to the East Bank. That is related to the traffic created within the West Bank and over the two bridges, which has generated other sources of income.

D. The raw materials necessary for industry in the West Bank are being imported by way of the East Bank, which keeps them from being subjected to the stringent Israeli import restrictions and makes these imports available at a lower price. Jordan benefits from this if those commodities are exported to it in their final form.

E. Visitors coming from Arab states to the West Bank and the Gaza Sector and also residents of the West Bank when they return from the East Bank can bring in a number of commodities in the form of gifts or for use in the West Bank, reducing the natives' dependence on Israeli products and helping to distribute commercial movement on the East Bank to a certain extent.

Social Effects

In addition to the economic effects, there are positive social effects of the opening of the bridges.

A. There are many families in the West Bank who rely for their livelihood on personal remittance of money from their sons working in the Arab states or the East Bank. If the bridges remain open, those transfers can be made in the form of cash which continues to pass over the bridges. Its owners may protect it by depositing it in the banks of the East Bank. If the bridges were closed, those families would be forced to emigrate to join their sons at the source of subsistence, or else their cash and deposits would be transferred to Israeli banks, benefiting those banks and harming those families. Drafts from sons to their families in the West Bank were estimated at about 1.231 billion Israeli pounds for 1975.

B. There are a number of persons living in the West Bank who have interests and investments either in the East Bank or in the Arab states. These people leave the West Bank temporarily to supervise and manage their interests and then return to their permanent homes in the West Bank, while the bridges remain open. If the bridges were closed, most of them would leave the Bank to look after their interests, since it would be less advantageous to remain than to leave.

C. The Jordanian government has adopted a policy of supporting the resistance of families of the West Bank by paying the salaries and wages of a number of social groups, such as teachers, lawyers and doctors, on the West Bank. It is believed that this policy will change if the bridges are closed.

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D. It was decided at the Ninth Summit Conference held in Baghdad to support the resistance of the people of the West Bank with the sum of 100 million dollars. The importance of having the bridges open lies in the ability to transfer those sums to the West Bank directly by way of the bridge (taking into consideration the importance of those sums in supporting the resistance of the people in the face of the Israeli occupation's coercion, preventing their emigration). If the bridges were closed, two things might follow. The first would be ending support and consequently shaking the resistance of the people. The second is the transfer of those sums of their deposit in Israeli banks, which is unlikely.

In summary, these positive effects have made it possible for the people of the West Bank and Gaza Sector to maintain an acceptable standard of living and have stopped them from considering emigration and leaving the West Bank. Some of them believe that the opening of the bridges was the main reason making life tolerable in the West Bank and the Gaza Sector.

What About the East Bank?

As for the East Bank, the policy of keeping the bridges open has had a part in achieving the following:

A. Continued supply of the East Bank with a major portion of its requirements for agricultural products. Agricultural exports from the West Bank and the Gaza Sector form a part of the total agricultural products offered in the central market of Amman which cannot be ignored, in addition to the fact that some of those products fill the need of some Arab markets.

B. Continuing to supply the East Bank with its requirements for some necessary manufactured goods, such as olive oil, vegetable oils and soap. These commodities and others fill the needs of some Arab markets.

C. Stimulating the Jordanian banking system, since a considerable part of the deposits of the commercial banks may be attributed to natives of the West Bank. The percentage of those deposits is estimated at about 10 to 15 percent of the total deposits of the commercial banks.

D. Stimulating the movement of savings and investment of the East Bank by investment in industrial companies or participating in building factories.

E. There is an indirect reason, which is that the closing of the bridges would lead to the emigration of a large number of people from the West Bank to the East Bank, creating crises in housing and causing inflation and a recession in economic activity in the absence of the ability to handle this emigration.

The open bridges have helped Israel to get rid of the problem of surplus agricultural production in the West Bank, since their prices are lower than the prices of Israeli products. However, Israel has been intending to change the structure of the agricultural sector, since it has encouraged products which Israeli industry uses, such as sesame, sugar beets, etc. Israel also benefits from taxes on those exports which are paid in foreign currency, and the amount of these taxes is paid in turn in Israeli currency.

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The following steps could put a stop to the infiltration of Israeli products:

- A. For agricultural commodities exported from the West Bank to the East, a certificate of origin must be obtained from West Bank authorities in the Ministry of Agriculture or any other agency attesting that the exported commodities come from the West Bank and Gaza. If a violation or smuggling is detected, then that source must be forbidden to export to the East Bank.
- B. Manufactured goods such as olive oil, stones, soap, etc., must have a certificate of origin from the chamber of commerce, cooperative societies or other reliable Arab authorities.
- C. Control must be tightened in the area of the bridges, and any traveller coming from the West Bank must be forbidden to bring in any commodity or product of Israeli origin, or these goods must be destroyed immediately in front of their owner as a warning to others. Here the importance of alerting the citizens to the dangers of smuggling should be emphasized.
- D. Supervision must be tightened in the al-'Aqabah region, since most smuggling operations take place through that area.

In light of all of this, one can summarize the following:

1. Israel has a clear policy aimed at containing economic activity in the occupied lands and working to suppress their activity to discourage investment. For example, it will be noted that only 47 percent of the total acreage of the West Bank is being used for agricultural purposes (that is, 261,420 hectares). In 1974 this acreage dropped to 202,000 hectares. It is worth mentioning that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank were established on about 35,000 hectares. Also, other agricultural land cannot be utilized for security reasons. Reliance on rain makes agricultural activity in the West Bank more difficult, since irrigated lands comprise no more than 4 percent of the total farmed land. All of that is followed by a decrease in the number of workers in the agricultural sector from 44,000 in 1968-69 to 31,000 in 1975-76. Consequently, the percentage of these workers in the total work force dropped from 42.5 percent in 1970 to 33.9 percent in 1976. In the Gaza Sector this percentage dropped from 31.6 percent in 1970 to 26.3 percent in 1975. Israel took advantage of this situation and tried to attract unemployed workers by giving them higher wages than they had been receiving. There is no doubt that that is equivalent to a first step toward detaching the people from their land and causing them to emigrate.
2. In return, there was no expansion in the industrial sector. This sector's share of the gross national product of the West Bank and Gaza Sector fell from 7 percent in 1968 to 5 percent in 1973.
3. Tourism and related services formed an important source of revenue from the West Bank before the occupation. In 1966, income from this source was between 6 and 7 million Jordanian dinars. Most of it came from tourism in Jerusalem. Israel tried to direct tourism to Israeli hotels, which lowered the rate of occupancy of Arab hotels from 50 percent in 1967 to 31 percent in 1973 and later.

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4. One cannot say on the basis of the Israeli or international (UN) information whether there is infiltration of Israeli goods across the open bridges. It is to be assumed that Arab importing countries are taking the steps necessary to prevent that and uphold the boycott. However, some indirect infiltration is inevitable, by incorporation of Israeli production into final Arab production. The question raised is: Must such infiltration be permitted if it is certain that it can happen?

In summary, in light of the situation from which the people of the occupied lands are suffering, closing the bridges means permitting the occupation authorities to isolate them and impose their power entirely on them. In this event, the occupation authorities will try to decrease economic activity and direct it toward a form which serves their economic and political interests and their ambitions for the land. Through economic pressure, Israel can limit the horizons and aspirations of the people and impel them to emigrate and abandon their land. Israel may resort to laws which it invented to confiscate these lands on the pretext of the absence of the owners. It is certain that in this event Israel will also move to tighten its grip on the farmers in the occupied lands by not permitting them to market their products at home. It was mentioned earlier that Israel is attempting to change the shape of agricultural production in the occupied lands and make it conform more closely to demand in its markets.

Closing the bridges means abandoning the West Bank and the Gaza Sector and creating conditions similar to those which prevailed after 1947, with Israeli economic and political control over conditions in the West Bank and Gaza, giving rise to the emigration of a majority of the population.

In view of that, although keeping the bridges open has led to some indirect economic benefit to Israel, it will be in the present and future interests of the people of the occupied lands and will help them to remain on their land and strengthen their resistance to the unlawful Israeli occupation. In other words, keeping the bridges open in light of current conditions gives hope to the people of the occupied lands and helps them in their resistance and defiance.

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LIBYA

BRIEFS

FERTILIZER PLANT--Libya has signed a contract with a group of German and Italian companies (consortium) headed by the West German (Uhdi) Company to build a fertilizer plant in Marsa al-Burayjah. The amount of the contract is 200 million West German marks. The plant will begin production in 1984 with a capacity of 1750 tons a day. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 13-19 Feb 81 p 48] 7587 COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI

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MAURITANIA

ALGERIA AIDS RESTORATION OF ORDER FOLLOWING COUP ATTEMPT

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 8 Apr 81 p 42

[Article by Samir Charbi]

Order Reigns

[Text] At daybreak on Thursday 26 March, on the rifle range of the Jdiria barracks, 30 kilometers from Nouakchott, Lt Cols Mohamed Ould Bah Ould Abdel Kader and Ahmed Salem Ould Side, and Lts Moustafa Niang and Doudou Seck were executed. The first act following the attempted coup of 16 March (JEUNE AFRIQUE No. 1056) had come to an end. The four death penalties had been pronounced on 24 March by a special military court which at the same time had sentenced five other "putschists" to hard labor for life. This was done in private and with the greatest secrecy in proceedings which opened on Saturday 21 March.

As soon as the verdict was known many important persons requested or recommended clemency for Lt Col Khouna Ould Haidalla. Among them were some members of the Military Committee of National Safety and the Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein. Dispatched with all possible speed, Vice President Tarek Aziz arrived 3 hours after the execution at the Nouakchott airport which had been especially kept open for him. On that same Thursday 26 March, while Nouakchott was broadcasting gestures of support and sympathy telegrams addressed to the government, it was denouncing "Moroccan hegemonism." The Jdiria executions were mentioned only once in Arabic--the press remained silent. On the other hand, a supporting march organized between a stadium in the capital and the esplanade of the presidency (3 kilometers) was widely publicized, including by Radio Algiers.

However, on 31 March, the importance of the complicity which the authors of the coup could find within the army, was far from being authenticated. At any rate the Alliance for a Democratic Mauritania denounced a violent repression which seems to have crashed down on about 1000 people. Other sources mentioned the arrest of about 30 officers. And a curfew was still in force in Nouakchott (from 1900 to 0600 in the morning). The airport, as well as the one in Nouadhibou, remained closed to international traffic, even though both welcomed several flights of large Algerian Antonovs carrying military materiel and military security "civilian" personnel. Order reigned in Nouakchott, but less and less Mauritanian order.

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SYRIA

VARIOUS CURRENTS AMONG MOSLEM BROTHERS REVIEWED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 20-26 Mar 81 pp 30, 31

Article: "Syria: Story of the Disputes in the Ranks of the Moslem Brothers"

Text What is going on in the ranks of the Moslem Brothers in Syria? What is the real nature of the disputes within the leadership? Available information indicates that the brothers' movement is currently holding an exceptional conference to deal with this subject.

These days, the "communiques" are numerous and multifarious, but they all play the one note of disputes in the circles of the movement of the Moslem Brothers.

One of these communiques bearing the name of Mr "Isam al-'Attar, severely attacks Mr 'Adnan Sa'd-al-Din and accuses him of "pushing the young people of Syria into an unequal struggle with the ruling regime in Damascus."

Another communique, also bearing al-'Attar's name, objects to the "appointment" of Mr Sa'd-al-Din as general overseer of the brothers, on the claim that he does not represent a force worth mentioning and has offered nothing to the movement or to Islamic action.

A third communique attacks the communique of the "Islamic revolution in Syria and its platform" and the persons signing it, Messrs Sa'id Hawi, 'Ali al-Bayanuni and 'Adnan Sa'd-al-Din.

The war of communiques goes on, but a simple process of investigation has subsequently proved that these communiques were forged, that there was no validity to them, and that they were "fabrications" by the Syrian intelligence agencies, which "took charge" of the process of distributing the communiques - without al-'Attar's knowledge, of course.

But does that mean that everything is as it should be in the ranks of the movement's leadership in Damascus?

Two Contradictory Views

The fact is that there are two contradictory views in this regard.

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The first view, whose source is circles in the wing of Sa'd-al-Din, Hawi and al-Bayanuni, holds that the rifts have been brought under control and that everyone, including al-'Attar himself, has rallied around the new command, following Sa'd-al-Din's election as general overseer and the granting of priority to the military activity commanded by the "Fighting Vanguard" ('Adnan 'Aqlah) within the country.

Various tendencies have agreed to support this organization in various ways, considering that "the current stage requires escalation of the armed military confrontation against the regime in Damascus."

Thus 'Adnan 'Aqlah "left" Syria for the outer world, and agreement was reached on a new strategy for the brothers' movement, under Sa'd-al-Din's command.

One can easily deduce another different view from a statement made this week by a prominent leader of the Moslem brothers to AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI; he said the following, in these words:

1. As of the publication of the latest issue of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, no agreement had been made among the various parties of the Moslem Brothers and consequently no new general overseer had been elected in Syria, unanimously or otherwise.
2. The communique to which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI referred in its previous issue (p 12) is false and slanders Mr al-'Attar in every sense.
3. al-'Attar has led the Moslem Brothers and still is leading the overwhelming majority of them, and the majority of the people in Syria, on the road to freedom, dignity and the desired Islamic future.
4. al-'Attar has not ventured to stop the struggle, especially since he did not cease it for one day, in previous or current times. He never asked for responsibilities; rather, it is his brothers who unanimously elected him general overseer in 1961 and have always wanted him to continue to lead the society, in spite of his repeated attempts to excuse himself and his constant desire to be exempted from all responsibility, in order to be at the service of all the Syrian people without distinction. He still insists although his brothers insist on the opposite.

Sa'd-al-Din's Circles Reply

Doesn't that statement mean continued disputes in the leadership of the movement, which would of necessity have an impact on the escalating domestic operations against the Syrian regime?

Here Sa'd-al-Din's circles reply, "The movement is a single rank. There is no truth to the various rumors which speak of rifts, which the agencies of Damascus themselves are propagating. The election was held in a democratic fashion and the various currents supported it."

Numerous items of evidence for this are presented, among them the fact that military operations have not stopped: "At the beginning of this month, a group of mujahids in the al-Harifah section of Damascus skirmished with armed elements, and the shir-

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mish continued for a whole hour. As a result of it, 42 of the authorities; personnel were killed and 25 were wounded, above and beyond the martyrdom of one brother and the wounding of another."

In addition, a group of mujahids recently made an attack on the Revolutionary Youth Federation headquarters in the center of Hamah (across from the bookstores in al-Dabbaghah). This area is not more than 60 meters away from the party headquarters and the main police center.

The group burst into the center while a party meeting was underway in it. It fought with guard personnel, then raided the auditorium, killing five party members, wounding others and setting off bombs in other rooms. It then withdrew rapidly and the special units located in the party's nearby building and the citadel were not able to intervene until it was too late.

The injuries in the ranks of the youth were not precisely spelled out, either. One should bear in mind that the brothers returned safely to their bases.

As a result of the operation, security in the city broke down. The special units occupied the streets and started firing here and there. The city went on strike and the shops closed down, without exception, for 3 days.

As a result of the operations the authorities arrested all the owners of the bookstores and shops near the Youth Center and subjected them to interrogation in a desperate attempt to learn the identity of the attackers.

An attempt was made to assassinate an official while he was visiting a village. He is now in the al-Salam hospital in Hamah for treatment, having received a wound which was not fatal.

A special unit patrol was hit at the Shaykh Muhammad al-Hamid Mosque and three of the men in it were killed. As a result the authorities' personnel went over the area with a fine tooth comb and killed a number of isolated citizens, including two children, the son of 'Abd-al-Karim al-Baydah and the son of Aminah and Ibrahim Junayd.

Two armed Youth of the Revolution personnel were killed in the Hamah movie theater.

One of the Youth of the Revolution personnel Fah Qandaqji, disappeared and as a result the special units and intelligence searched the al-Sabuniyah section in Hamah and subjected the people to humiliation after gathering them together, men and women, in the schools, in the cold and rain. Six hundred citizens were then arrested.

Official personnel arrested 16 people from the Electricity Organization in Hamah on the charge of distributing publications opposed to the regime and exposing the corruption of the regime. Concerning these arrested persons, the following was learned:

1. Rashi Najjar, an employee and clerk in the bureau, was subjected to the most severe forms of torture.

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2. 'Azzam Misri: a technical supervisor.
3. 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Abbud Musalli, a technical supervisor.
4. 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Hayik, head of the organization bureau.
5. Muhammad 'Irwani.

The same circles continue to present examples of the brothers' escalating activity in Damascus, Hums, Latakia, Jisr al-Shughur and other Syrian towns in the midst of a complete official media blackout whose goal is to stress the "rumors" being bruited about concerning the rifts which are of necessity reflected in the brothers' armed military activity.

An official in the Sa'd-al-Din wing (who asked that his name not be disclosed, for security considerations) told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI that the Syrian authorities are now propagating news of rifts and at the same time imposing a "blackout" on the brothers' internal activities.

A General Conference

There remains this question:

What is the cause of these "rifts?"

The answer here varies as the viewpoints vary. There are people who say that the main reason lies in the question of the election of a general guide. While one current of the brothers demands that the historic leadership (al-'Attar) continue to bear responsibility, others call for a change and support Sa'd-al-Din.

While a large group of brothers considers that al-'Attar has authorization from the Fighting Vanguard to speak in its name, and it supports him, others object to this, pointing out that Sa'd-al-Din has been elected general overseer of the movement and that 'Adnan 'Aqlah has "pledged fealty" to him.

Among the other causes of dispute are the style of action and extent of independence of the movement.

There are people in the "international organization" who criticize Sa'd-al-Din's wing for his ties with certain organizations and demand total freedom.

Whatever the case may be there, the fact remains that the Moslem Brothers' movement is holding a secret exceptional conference abroad to study the new developments and create a common denominator for the various trends which will restore their unity and coherence.

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